

from a juvenile home in April. He had been placed there in connection with juvenile drug and stolen vehicle charges. I will bet you that if you and I take the time to try to get this person's record, we will find a record as long as your arm and that person ought not to have been anywhere near that neighborhood to be able to fire a gun.

I will bet you that the record would justify, by any standard of any reasonable person, that this young man ought to have been in jail. But he was out on the streets with a gun. I don't have the record, but this is a guy who walked away from a halfway house or a juvenile home in April. Now it is almost the end of June.

Mr. LEAHY. If the Senator will yield further, since he has already read that, if he will look at some of the numbers of unclosed cases, or the number of times when leads are not followed up, the number of complaints I have received in my office, and people making complaints to police departments that have never been followed up, witnesses never sought—we spend an awful lot more in law enforcement in this city than they do in the whole States of North Dakota and Vermont. There are a lot more people, a lot more officers available. I know many of them do excellent work, and they put their lives on the line, and some lose their lives. But I also know there are a lot of areas in this city where drug selling is out in the open and a matter of public knowledge, and where illegal possession of weapons is a matter of open knowledge, and nothing happens until the spotlight of one of these terrible tragedies occurs.

So I appreciate the Senator's comments.

Mr. DORGAN. Let me make one final point. There is one other part of this, the case I have described, the Leo Gonzales Wright case.

I have always thought that in this country, in our criminal system, we ought to have two standards, one for violent offenders and one for non-violent offenders. In every State, violent offenders should never get time off for good behavior. Your prison cell ought to be your address until the day your sentence ends, period, no time off. Leo Gonzales Wright earned nearly 5 years of time off for good behavior despite 33 violations in prison for assault, weapons, and drugs—5 years off for good behavior. He should not have been on the streets.

I have a bill that is simple. I have never been able to get it passed. It says this: If any jurisdiction in this country lets a violent offender out of prison early and that person commits a violent crime during the time they would have been serving a sentence, then the government—the city, county, or State that let him out—is responsible to the victim or the victim's family and doesn't have immunity from a lawsuit. This bill would force them make a calculation before sending a violent offender back to the street as to, what

might this cost us in terms of what that offender might do to a potential victim? I would like to see Congress pass that at some point. I am going to continue to try.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS

Mr. COVERDELL. Mr. President, there is no community in America that is suffering more difficulty today than rural America in agribusiness. My State is a very large agriculture-based State, and ever since I have been in the Senate, we have been struggling with drought, flood, low commodity prices—you name it. It has been very unsettling to families that have been in agribusiness for over a hundred years, that are facing very difficult personal decisions about their ability to stay in business.

Now, to be candid, by now we should have passed S. 1233, a \$60.7 billion budget authority for agriculture, rural development, and nutrition programs. The bill contains provisions for food stamps, child nutrition, payments to the Federal Crop Insurance Program, Commodity Credit Corporation, and discretionary spending for agricultural purposes. It is the people's business because agriculture is the cornerstone of our national security, our quality of life, and our economy. In our State, agriculture is one-third of the economy, and across the Nation it approaches 30 percent.

We are stalled for political purposes. We ought to be doing the Nation's business. We ought to be proceeding with this agriculture bill. This is not the time to have a debate between two very different views about how to deal with the Patients' Bill of Rights. I am stunned that those on the other side of the aisle would choose agriculture—which, as I said, is so terribly stressed—and use that as a vehicle to try to create a political debate in the Senate. I have letters from our school of agriculture, I have documentation of the massive losses that have occurred in agriculture in our State, and we look to this legislation to be a part of the relief, a part of stabilizing agriculture in our State.

Last year alone, we lost \$700 million in agriculture interests in the State of Georgia. I will tell you what this reminds me of. It is an uncaring kind of way of dealing with this legislation. It

reminds me of the way the administration handled disaster relief. In the omnibus bill of 1998, we gave the Department of Agriculture \$3 billion for disaster payments, and October went by, and November went by, December, January, February, March, April, May, and June; and finally, 9 months later, we got disaster payments into the hands of people who have long since passed financing requirements and planning decisions and the like. And here we are once again trying to deal with this critical bill, and we have basically a political filibuster underway that can do nothing but add to more anxiety and worry in this very important economic sector of our country dealing with thousands upon thousands of families every day.

We ought to be on with the business of getting this agricultural appropriations bill handled. We will find the right time to handle these other issues. But right now, it is time for the people's business, and it happens to be a group of people who are in deep trouble in America.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the bill.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1233) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

AMENDMENT NO. 737

(Purpose: To prohibit arbitrary limitations or conditions for the provision of services and to ensure that medical decisions are not made without the best available evidence or information)

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) proposes an amendment numbered 737.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Amendments Submitted.")

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Robb
Roberts
Rockefeller
Roth
Santorum
Sarbanes
Schumer
Sessions

Shelby
Smith (NH)
Smith (OR)
Snowe
Specter
Stevens
Thomas
Thompson

Thurmond
Torricelli
Voinovich
Warner
Wellstone
Wyden

NAYS—1

Breaux

NOT VOTING—2

Gramm

Harkin

QUORUM CALL

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. LOTT. I don't believe there was objection.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will continue to call the roll.

The legislative clerk resumed the call of the roll and the following Senators entered the Chamber and answered to their names:

[Quorum No. 7]

Coverdell	Kennedy	Nickles
Feingold	Kohl	Schumer
Feinstein	Lott	Sessions
Fitzgerald	Murkowski	Voinovich

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I move to instruct the Sergeant at Arms to request the presence of absent Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is in order since a quorum is not present.

Mr. LOTT. I ask for the yeas and nays, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. NICKLES. I announce that the Senator from Texas (Mr. GRAMM) is necessarily absent.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 183 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Abraham	Daschle	Jeffords
Akaka	DeWine	Johnson
Allard	Dodd	Kennedy
Ashcroft	Domenici	Kerrey
Baucus	Dorgan	Kerry
Bayh	Durbin	Kohl
Bennett	Edwards	Kyl
Biden	Enzi	Landrieu
Bingaman	Feingold	Lautenberg
Bond	Feinstein	Leahy
Boxer	Fitzgerald	Levin
Brownback	Frist	Lieberman
Bryan	Gorton	Lincoln
Bunning	Graham	Lott
Burns	Grams	Lugar
Byrd	Grassley	Mack
Campbell	Gregg	McCain
Chafee	Hagel	McConnell
Cleland	Hatch	Mikulski
Cochran	Helms	Moynihan
Collins	Hollings	Murkowski
Conrad	Hutchinson	Murray
Coverdell	Hutchison	Nickles
Craig	Inhofe	Reed
Crapo	Inouye	Reid

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A quorum is present.

The majority leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, the Senate has a responsibility, obviously, to do the people's business. Up until a couple of days ago, we were doing pretty good this year. We had already moved four appropriations bills. We had taken up a number of important issues including the Y2K liability bill, the financial services modernization, the national missile defense bill, education. We were moving right along. But all of a sudden a couple of days ago that stopped.

Why is that? It is because the Democrats—Senator KENNEDY, Senator DASCHLE, Senator FEINSTEIN, and others—want to offer an unrelated bill to agriculture appropriations. That bill is the Patients' Bill of Rights.

Going back to last fall, we have talked many times about finding a way to have that legislation considered, trying to come up with some time-frame that is fair to all. Consistently we have had requests for many amendments. I don't know, I think it started off with the Democrats saying they had to have 40 amendments. I believe at some point it got down to 20, although it is not clear to me they would even agree to limit it to 20.

On the other hand, we have argued we have a good Patients' Bill of Rights bill, one that was developed by a task force chaired by Senator NICKLES which included Senator COLLINS, Dr. BILL FRIST, Senator SANTORUM, Senator JEFFORDS, and Senator ROTH. A really good group worked very hard to come up with a good bill, with some provisions for protections of patients' rights, with provisions for an appeals process when there is a disagreement with a decision within a managed care facility, both internally and externally. It is a good bill. We are prepared to vote on that.

The Democrats, on the other hand, have a bill of their own that takes a very different approach, and a big part of it is lawsuits will be the final arbiter on how these health decisions will be made.

We say if you have a good package, let's vote on yours. We will vote on ours. This week we, in effect, did that. We voted not to table our proposal, and we voted to table the underlying Kennedy amendment.

We have tried very hard to come up with a way for this to be considered without it becoming an obstruction to the people's business.

What is the people's business? The bill pending is the agriculture appro-

priations bill, \$60.7 billion for the farmers in America. But it goes beyond just farmers. It also includes such programs as food stamps, women, infants, children, school breakfast, and lunch programs. It is a broad bill and an important bill. At a time when our farmers have lost markets and are having a tough time, we are tied up and delaying the agriculture appropriations bill with an unrelated measure.

In addition to that, we have ready for consideration the transportation appropriations bill, the State-Justice-Commerce appropriations bill, the foreign operations appropriations bill, and I believe in short order the Treasury-Postal Service appropriations bill.

In addition to that, we have very important legislation such as the intelligence authorization bill we need to have considered, now that we have passed the defense authorization and appropriations bills. We have the very critical question of how are we going to deal with the nuclear espionage at our labs around the country. We have an important proposal pending on that. We have several very important appropriations bills that we need to move. They are the people's business.

The point is, we want to have our other measure considered. We have gone back and forth. Senator DASCHLE and I have worked through the last 36 hours or so. We have gone back and forth with alternative suggestions. We started out 2 nights ago saying maybe we can do it this Wednesday and Thursday and be through with it Thursday night. That did not get very far.

Then we said, how about if we take it up July 12 when we come back from the recess and we will spend that Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and by the close of business on Thursday we will have completed this debate.

Maybe some people say that is not enough time. That is a pretty long period of time for debate on a legislative measure, and it is a long period of time when you take into consideration the other work that we really must do for the people in passing appropriations bills, in complying with the budget resolution, and the reconciliation bill to allow us to return some of the tax overpayment to the working people of this country. That is a long period of time in the middle of the summer when our focus really needs to be on considering the appropriations bills that provide what the people in this country need from their Government, if you are convinced these appropriations bills do that.

We talk about agriculture and transportation. You can certainly argue that. Foreign operations, here is a time when we have very delicate relations around the world. We just passed the State Department authorization bill after about 3 years of trying. It seems now we need to provide the funds that go along with that. So we went back and forth.

I want to read the latest iteration as of 6:30 last night, June 23, of what we